

Meeting set on proposed Laguna shooting range

by Dawn Pillsbury
Sonoma West Staff Writer

SANTA ROSA — Santa Rosa police will hold a community meeting next month to discuss plans for a shooting range near the Laguna.

Tim Senkir, training sergeant for the Santa Rosa Police Department, said current plans would put the 200-yard-long rifle range on the old Brown farm, now owned by Santa Rosa, next to the Caltrans utility build-

ings on Highway 12 between Llano Road and the Laguna. He stressed that the plans are not firm and the department is looking for community input on the project.

"It's just a proposal at this time," Senkir said. "But we have a definite need for a shooting range and this is the top location."

Currently, Santa Rosa police get their shooting practice at a private range near the U.S. Coast Guard

base at Two Rock in north Marin. If the police lose access to that range, the next choice would be in Alameda County, some 60 miles away.

Sebastopol police practice at Montana Hawk, a commercial shooting range in Cotati. The sheriff's department uses a range at the Los Guilicos juvenile detention facility.

"We're asking for help from the community," said

Senkir. "If we can't go here, help us to find a place."

He said the range would be outdoors and officers would shoot into a bullet-catching trap system. Lead in bullets has not been shown to leach into dirt, but he said they would invest in the expensive bullet-catching system to allay any concerns.

Senkir said he is concerned that people will oppose the range because of concerns for wildlife and noise.

Sebastopol resident Helen Shane, who sits on the Sebastopol Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve Implementation Committee, said the committee has received no official word of the shooting range.

Speaking for herself, "I'd be very much opposed because of its impact on wildlife," said Shane. "It flies in the face of everything we know about habitat preservation. It's just a bad idea."

The community meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Jan. 10 at the Sebastopol Grange Hall on Highway 12. 12/20/
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TARGET PRACTICE — Laguna preservationists are expected to oppose a police shooting range in this area east of Sebastopol.